

Message Text

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ACTION EA-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 /004 W

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P R 151102Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5258

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLAS VIENTIANE 5624

USIA FOR IPS, IBS, CENTRAL NEWS DESK AND LAO SERVICE, IEA/L,
IOP/G, STATE FOR EA/P, EA/LC, S/PRS, BANGKOK FOR VOA AND PAO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PINT, LA

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION TO US WITHDRAWAL NAM NGUM PROJECT

1. LAO RADIO AND NEWSPAPERS HAVE DENOUNCED THE UNITED STATES
WITHDRAWAL OF ITS FIVE MILLION DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION
TO THE SECOND PHASE OF THE NAM NGUM DAM PROJECT AS RENEGING ON A
PROMISE. THEY HAVE CONCURRENTLY STRESSED THE LAO GOVERNMENT'S
DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE WITH THE PROJECT ANYWAY.

2. THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN PREMATURELY ANNOUNCED AMERICAN
WITHDRAWAL FROM NAM NGUM PROJECT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST
14. HOWEVER IT WAS NOT UNTIL SEP. 11, BY WHICH TIME THE US
HAD ACTUALLY WITHDRAWN, THAT THE MEDIA PICKED UP THE BRICKBATS.
THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT, REPEATED ON SEPT. 11,
WAS FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD. THAT AFTERNOON'S OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE,
HOWEVER, HEADED ITS ACCOUNT OF THE AFFAIR AS "THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA DOESN'T KEEP ITS PROMISES," AND SAID THE
AMERICAN "PRETEXTS" FOR WITHDRAWING WERE (1) THE NEW
SITUATION IN LAOS, WHICH MADE THE US INCAPABLE OF PROVIDING "SO-
CALLED 'AID' TO LAOS" AND (2) THE DISSOLUTION OF USAID/LAOS.

3. THE LAO REVOLUTIONARY PARTY'S SIENG PAXAXON NEWSPAPER, THE
NATIONAL RADIO, THE PATHET LAO RADIO, AND LOCAL NEWSPAPERS
EDITORIALIZED INDIGNANTLY OVER THE WEEKEND.

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4. THE NATIONAL RADIO HIT HARDEST WITH THREE SEPARATE EDITORIALS, EACH READ SEVERAL TIMES. ONE EDITORIAL SAID, "BEFORE THE INK DRIED ON THE DOCUMENT (THE 1974 BILATERAL NAM NGUM LOAN AGREEMENT), THE UNITED STATES UNILATERALLY ANNOUNCED THE NULLIFICATION OF ITS SIGNATURE... THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL SINCE THE US HAS ON MANY OCCASIONS BETRAYED ITS OWN SIGNATURE -- IT TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT THE 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT ON LEYS AND SO FORTH... HOWEVER, OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES HAVE PLEDGED TO HELP US CONSTRUCT THE DAM... THE LAO GOVERNMENT WILL RESOLVE TO CONTINUE CONSTRUCTION AND COMPLETE IT AS SCHEDULED."

5. ON SEPT. 11, SIENG PAXAXON REITERATED THE BROKEN PROMISE THEME AND ADDED THAT THE US DECISION IS UNREASONABLE AND IMPOLITE. ANOTHER SIENG PAXAXON EDITORIAL ON SEPT. 13 PRAISED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO CONTINUE THE PROJECT. BOTH EDITORIALS WERE ALSO READ SEVERAL TIMES ON NATIONAL RADIO.

6. XAT LAO, THE FORMERLY MODERATE AND STILL PRIVATELY-OWNED NEWS-PAPER, ON SEPT. 13 DESCRIBED THE "UNILATERAL" AMERICAN DECISION AND REPEATED THE TWO "PRETEXTS" FROM LAO PRESSE.

7. PATHET LAO RADIO ALSO DISCUSSED THE "REFUSAL (OF THE U.S.) TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS COMMITMENT." HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO FBIS TRANSCRIPTS RECEIVED HERE, PATHET LAO RADIO DID NOT INDULGE IN LONG DISCUSSIONS OF THE EVENT.
CONVERSE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: n/a
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Disposition Authority: n/a
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Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
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